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THE BACK TRAIL

BY LISSIE C. FARMER

TWO gangs of timber cruisers had gone out in the bright autumn days to "look" a piece of timber well up on the mountain side. They had established their camps a few miles apart by mountain streams and busily each day the men tramped back and forth through the great evergreen trees, calculating the number of trees on each ten-acre piece of land, estimating the amount of timber in the trees, and its quality, the lay of the land for logging, and all the detailed conditions that the timber cruiser must report of the forests he goes through.

Suddenly there descended upon them a mountain storm—they had hoped to get their work finished before the bad weather set in, but now the snow was filtering down steadily through the green boughs, making walking difficult. They would have to get out of there and quickly or they would be snowbound in one of the early deep snowfalls that sometimes came to this mountain section.

Now there were only two men in the two gangs of cruisers who had been in the district before, and knew the trails and nearest houses, the passes, the fords or other crossings of the streams; these two men were Nick Adams, the foreman, and his son, Joe, and both of them were in the lower camp. The men of the other camp did not have food supplies to last long; did not have enough blankets to keep them warm in snowy weather; and did not know the best routes to follow to get out of their location. Clearly,

one of the Adams' men must go to their rescue, or they might all be lost and starved or frozen in an attempt to get to a lower altitude.

"I'll go," volunteered Joe Adams, and he began at once getting together the things needed for the trip; a blanket strapped on his back, pockets and pouches filled with such compressed food articles as cheese, bacon, raisins, flour, cracker crumbs, coffee, a good knife, of course, matches and other little articles.

"Mind your steps when you cross by the bluff," admonished his father anxiously.

"I'll make that before dark, I think," answered Joe.

It was nearly evening and he had already eaten supper. There was no time to lose.

"Well, so long," he said, swinging away along the mountain trail. "If anything serious happens, I'll give three long whistles." He had a tin bird call with him. Its sound would carry further than his voice.

The falling snow and the trees soon hid him from view of the other campers. Tall and lithe and erect was Joe, clean of body and clean of soul as men count cleanliness. He rounded the bluff before dark, as he had said he would. Beyond that, the night began to fall about him, and in the darkness, he could not go on so rapidly. Often he had to stop to make sure of the way by all the signs of the woodsmen—a fallen tree, a sharp stone, a special tangle of salal, or an extra large chinkapin bush.

The night grew heavier and then came terror!

From above him came the cry of a timber wolf. A few seconds and it came again; then again and again, clearer and nearer each time. A few minutes more and it was doubled—two wolves together; then others, perhaps a half dozen, all seeming to be coming straight down the mountain side.

The snowing had stopped and the air was growing colder. Just ahead of him a path came down the mountain and ended in the trail he was following, at a sharp right angle. From the sounds of the wolves, it seemed they were coming down this mountain path, and would soon be upon the trail he was following. Once on this trail, the wolves could not but soon be about him unless he swerved to right or left, and even then, they would



LUMBERING IN THE NORTHWEST

find his track and follow. He knew too well what it meant to meet a pack of hungry wolves alone in the forest in a lonely path, and he grew cold with fear and dread—but not for himself. It was the thought of the men in the upper camp, not knowing the way if they tried to get out, which they would be almost sure to do if he did not reach them soon. If he only could get past that place where the mountain path came into the trail he was following before the wolves got down to it!

He walked very fast now—almost ran as he heard the cries of the wolves constantly nearing. Now he was almost to the end of their path: he hurried with all his strength, stumbling and then righting himself as he pressed on.

At last! He reached the path—the wolves were but a short distance above—he plunged across the path, raced into the snowy trail beyond, panting and trembling. There was a large red fir ahead of him. Through the creaking snow, he sprang towards it, reached it, caught a lower limb of it and swung up into its boughs, climbing higher and higher as he heard the hungry pack approach. Safety at last!

Safety for him, but what of the men in the upper camp? Would the wolves catch his track as they came to the trail he had followed, follow him and keep him a prisoner in the tree until succor came? He would not starve even if they kept him there a long time for he had food along and he could wrap a blanket about him for additional warmth, but oh—the men in—that—other—camp, what would become of them? While he was kept a prisoner in the tree, they would probably start out, get lost in the snow—without food—cold—tired with tramping, lay down and . . . what then?

The cries of the wolves sounded wild and close. They had reached the trail. He could see them from his perch in the tree. Gaunt, dark figures, they nosed about; they caught his scent as they sniffed. One large wolf ran along his tracks; the others followed him—eight of them altogether.

They slunk along, but—they were going away from him instead of towards him! Why were they doing that? A little wind had risen and it was blowing from the wolves toward him! So, not getting his scent from the tree where he was just ahead of them on account of this wind, they had taken the back instead of the forward trail. With all their animal cunning, they did not know from the shape of the tracks that the human creature whose scent they had found, had just passed and was but a short distance ahead.

Joe waited and listened as their cries grew fainter behind him. When they were some distance away, he dropped down from his tree perch and hastened on.

"It may give Dad and the others a little scare about me when they hear those

wolves," he mused, "but I hope they won't worry."

Soon it was snowing again, and Joe felt exceedingly thankful that One who sees all had saved him so wondrously from a long delay in his rescue of his mates. It was about 10 o'clock when he caught the light of their campfire. Welcome voices came to him. He called and they answered. Soon he was with them telling of his adventure with the wolves.

"We had better get out of here right away," he advised. "I can show you a fairly good path down to Alden's."

The men had been earnestly discussing what was best for them to do since the coming of the storm, and were immensely relieved to have some one with them who knew the road to safety.

They made and drank some hot coffee, rolled up their few blankets and other camp outfit, and set out with Joe as their guide. There was a long tramp for them, and the snow getting deeper all the time, but as their path was mostly downhill, it was not so tiresome as Joe's had been.

Shortly after midnight, they heard shoutings in the distance. They answered and hastened towards the direction of the shouts. Very shortly they were with the other man.

"So the wolves didn't get you?" said Nick Adams as his son drew near. "We heard them. An ugly pack!"

"They took the back instead of the forward scent," explained Joe, "if it hadn't have been for that, I guess I'd be marooned in that tree yet where I climbed to get away from them."

A few miles more tramping and both camps of men had reached Alden's and seated about his glowing fireplace, enjoyed a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs, with hot biscuits.

The Wind's Greeting

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH

SOME people think the wintry wind
Has such a scary sound
When chilly winter nights have come
With shadows all around.

Some think he peers through window
panes
And hopes to frighten you;
He hides his lips within his hands
And groans, "Ou-ou-ou-ou!"

I think he is a dear old chap
Whose heart is kind and gay—
The sort of man who likes to join
The children at their play.

I do not think he ever groans
But when he looks at you,
He merely calls in a jolly way,
"Hul-loo, hul-loo, hul-loo!"

If you should wonder whom he meant,
When thus he calls "Hul-loo,"
And asked him, he would say, I'm sure,
"Just yo-ou, yo-ou, just yo-ou!"

Reading Science

BY J. ELMER RUSSELL

To the young people who have not yet added books on science to their reading there is a great pleasure ahead. Of course some young people have the idea that scientific books must be hard reading. They remember, perhaps, having to wrestle with lessons in chemistry, or physics, or biology, and while they were interested they made up their minds that when the course was completed some lighter books would occupy their attention.

As a matter of fact, however, scientific books are now being put out in a very attractive form. Most of the big technical words are replaced by simpler, everyday sort of words. Frequently these books are profusely illustrated. It is a kind of liberal education just to look through the pictures.

For example take the new books on flowers or birds. They are prepared for folks who want to know about the wonders of the world in which we live, but who are busy people, and have not the time or perhaps the ability to master technical treatises. I take down a flower book from a shelf in my library; it is called a "Fieldbook of American Wild Flowers," and is written by F. Scuyler Matthews. On almost every other page there is the picture of a flower, blossom and leaf. Some of the pictures are beautifully colored. On the page opposite the illustration is an easily understood story of some of the flowers in the family which the pictures illustrate. With such a book one can easily become acquainted with most of the wild flowers near his home in a single season. Here is a book called, "Bird Neighbors" by Neltje Blanchan. The story of the birds is arranged by the color of the birds. Blue and bluish birds are grouped together, and in like manner brown or brownish birds. Many pictures in color make it possible quickly to identify the common birds.

"The Friendly Stars", by Martha Evans Martin is another popular science book which lies before me as I write. It is very easy reading though there are few pictures. Any young man or young woman who will devote half an hour a day for a couple of weeks to "The Friendly Stars" will get a very real acquaintance with astronomy.

Only the other day the writer borrowed from a public library, a book simply fascinating in pictures and story. It was the first volume of "The Outline of Science", a plain story simply told, edited by Prof. J. Arthur Thomson. In such a book as this the best answer which science can give to a host of questions which occur to every inquiring mind is given. Like a real scientist, however, the author is ready to say again and again, that we do not know the reason why certain things occur. Here are some of the questions discussed in this book. "What is the source of the heat of the sun?" "Is

the planet Mars inhabited?" "Will the earth eventually cool down so that no life can exist upon it?" "What are shooting stars?" "Whence came the coal which the miners dig?" "What is the difference between mind in man and mind in animals?" "Why do salmon swim up the rivers to spawn?" These are only a few of the questions in which intelligent young people are interested and which are answered in this and other scientific books.

Besides the enlargement of mind which comes from the reading of science, such books are of real practical value. For example there are certain poisonous plants with which young people should become familiar as a matter of protection. Poison ivy is one of the most familiar of these. How can you tell it from the common Virginia creeper or five-leaved ivy? Then there is the poison sumac a shrub which grows on the shores of inland lakes and from which one ought to steer clear while out boating or bathing. Many people are fond of eating mushrooms, but no one ought to gather and eat mushrooms without being able to distinguish between those which are edible and those which are poisonous. A knowledge of the way electricity acts is also of very great practical importance, especially when caught in a thunderstorm. Really there is not as much danger in a thunderstorm as there is in taking an automobile ride, but many have been struck by lightning because they foolishly took refuge under a tree. Better stay out in the open than to get under a tree or than to go into a barn filled with new hay.

Said one of the great scientists, "I think thy thoughts after thee, O God." Said another lover of nature as he watched the opening of a flower, "I beheld God in his glory passing by and I bowed my head in reverence." The reading of science will bring to one who has the right spirit a feeling of the greatness of God, and a sense of his presence. "The heavens declare the glory of God", said the psalmist. And Wordsworth looking at the evening sky wrote,

"And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply inter-
fused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting
suns,
And the round ocean and the living
air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of
man."

The reading of science is really the getting acquainted with the way God has built up this wonderful world of ours, and the way he is still at work. How our thought of God enlarges when we think of stars so distant that the light which started at the time of the birth of Christ is just arriving.

It is possible to study the creation and forget the Creator just as it is possible to

look at a picture and forget the Artist, but young people of devout spirit will rise from the study of nature to a higher thought of nature's God.



THE BIRTHDAY GIRL

Made with a Kodak

Blue Birds and Baby Gowns

BY BELLA DIMICK

THE Alliance had been making garments for the Visiting Nurses, and the Blue Birds thought that they could do so, too. They voted to give seven baby gowns, one for each girl.

"Can you sew?" said Edna to Marjorie. "Well," said Marjorie, "I make my doll clothes; and I've done doilies, in outline stitch." "Aren't you glad of this kimono style?" put in Geraldine. "That's the meanest part of a doll's dress, sewing in the sleeves."

"Except putting a belt on the skirt," declared Josephine; "I used to tie my doll's skirts on, by the gathering thread, before these one-piece things came in."

The teacher asked them to come to her house, on Saturday, to make the gowns, and celebrate a birthday, and said she would ask the mothers, too. It would be a Mother-and-Daughter party.

When Saturday came, the girls and mothers assembled, each with her needles and thread, thimble and scissors in a little silken bag. The teacher had two bags, but they did not contain sewing materials; each held seven buttons, pairs being separated, and put in different bags. Marjorie passed one to the ladies, Josephine at the same time passing the other to the girls. When the buttons were all drawn, they matched them. Each girl had the mother of some other girl!

They drew chairs close to the adopted mothers, and the work began. The gowns were of white outing cloth, with a "fuzz" as Dorothea called it, on both sides. It was soft, and easy to sew. They were cut with the sleeves on, "like a paper-doll dress," said Geraldine. There was no troublesome arm-hole, with sleeve to be set in. That made the task easier.

The mothers showed how to sew the seams; how to turn the hem on the sleeves and bottom of the gown, which they sewed with over-and-over stitch. This took a good while. Then came the hard part, the finishing of the neck, and placket. Some of the girls did not know what a placket was; it sounded something like "pocket." They know, now, and will always remember. If you don't know ask your mother.

There was tape to bind the neck, and ends of it were left for strings.

In all their lives, I think these girls had not sat still so long, or worked so hard. There was a general straightening of backs, and stamping of feet, when the work was over, and a general skurry to the yard, where cramped muscles could be limbered, and cramped voices, liberated.

"Wh-ew!" said Betty, lifting her dress and examining the hem, "how much sewing do you suppose there is in the clothes we have on?" "It's machine work, isn't it?" was Edna's question. "Yes, but think of the work to get it ready for the machine, and what must it have been when there were no machines?" They looked at their pretty clothes, and agreed when Betty said, "Why, women must have had to sew all the time!"

Presently they were summoned. The dining-room doors had been closed, while they sewed, and now the teacher opened them.

There was a charmingly set table, at which the little girls were placed, while the mothers drew their chairs into a sociable group, near the merry flock. On the table was a beautiful cake; white frosted, wreathed with flowers, and pink candles atop. The candles were burning when the company sat down, and the first thing was to make a wish for the birthday girl, who was Betty, and then—Blow! till the candles were out. The cake was then placed before Betty, who essayed to cut it; but the knife brought forth a hollow, metallic sound. Such a fine, handsome cake, what could be the trouble?

"Let me try," said the teacher. She sawed hard at the unyielding loaf, then lifted the "cake," which was only a cake-pan, covered with white paper, sprinkled with flour! Under it, on a round board, stood a circle of paraffine kewpies, with bright bows of crepe paper on their heads, in different colors. Some of the kewpies were pink, some were white, and one, only, was black. They stood firmly on the board, because their feet had been heated! Little paper dolls were passed, each bearing a number, one being the



THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

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Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

125 ANAWAN AVE.,
WEST ROXBURY STATION,
BOSTON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and enjoy it very much. I give out the *Beacons* on Sunday and I have a hard time of it, there is such a rush for them. I go to the Unitarian Church in West Roxbury. My minister's name is Rev. Harold G. Arnold. My teacher's name is Miss Carter. She is very nice. I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear a pin.

Yours truly,
BILLY CLAY.

22 BILLINGHAM STREET,
WEST SOMERVILLE 44, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—I have lost my pin and would like to have a new one. I go to the Second Unitarian Church and we have a new minister. His name is Rev. Thomas Turrell. My

prize number. This was number seven, and Dorothea was the one who drew it. She got the black doll!

The real birthday cake was then brought, and ice cream, and the party began in earnest. A little package, put at Betty's place, contained forget-me-nots, the class flower. Not natural ones; they were of velvet, and made up in lasting qualities what they lacked in sweetness.

The gowns were given to a Visiting Nurse, who told this story: She went, the day before, to a house occupied by a Spanish family, no English understood. There was a baby, four days old, dressed in black satin! She could find no other clothes for the baby. If she had had a gown with her, as she usually had, she would have put it on the little creature; but not a gown was left, in the visiting nurses stock. Now she would go down there, and change that baby's clothes! The Blue Birds felt they did a good thing when they made those gowns, even at the cost of cramped muscles, and voices in need of exercise!

Guess

BY MARJORIE DILLON

I'VE something strange and all brand-new,
And so have you—this something queer;
The whole world shares it with us, too.
Guess what! The shining bright New Year.

Relief

BY HAROLD WILLARD GLEASON

IF there were no Land of Faery,
No realm where rainbows gleam;
No elf nor sprite to put to flight
Drab sorrow, sordid dream;
If air-castles were not builded,
Nor hope-ships sent to sea,
What dures drear our sojourn here
In the work-day world would be!

Sunday-school teacher is Mr. Moore and the Superintendent is Mr. Olsen. I have had four years' perfect attendance in Sunday school and two years' perfect attendance in school. I am in the seventh grade in school, and will be thirteen in January.

I would like very much to correspond with some boy of my age.

Yours truly,
ROBERT H. COLLIER.

Box 57, MILLBROOK, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—I go to the Unitarian Church of Duxbury. We haven't any regular minister at the present time, but I think we are soon going to have one.

I am fourteen years old. There are five in my class beside myself. Our teacher is Mrs. Peterson. I have *The Beacon* every Sunday. I think it is a very nice paper. I would like to join the Beacon Club and wear its button. I also would like to have someone write to me who belongs to the Club.

Yours truly,
DORIS EDWARDS.

Church School News

At the October meeting of the church-school teachers in Cleveland, Ohio, the Rev. Philip C. Jones, minister of religious education in one of the neighboring churches, spoke to the teachers on "Present Emphases in Religious Education." The opening sessions of the church school, says the calendar, were characterized by good attendance and much interest on the part of both teachers and pupils. Twelve members of last year's senior and post-graduate classes have left the city this fall to enter colleges in various states. Twenty-one new pupils were enrolled before October 14th. The adult discussion class on October 15th was addressed by Mrs. Lucia Ames Mead. It was expected that Dr. Charles F. Thwing would also be present and take part in the discussion which followed the address. Several teachers from this school are in attendance at the Cleveland School of Religious Education, a high-grade, interdenominational evening school for the training of teachers and leaders. The Director of Religious Education, Miss Gertrude Taft, and four teachers attended the Meadville Conference Institute for Religious Education held in Buffalo, October 26th to 28th.

At Kennebunk, Maine, the Associate Secretary of the Department of Religious Education saw an interesting church school on November 4th. A large adult class added materially to the size and interest in the school. The children are well graded into the various classes and the Beacon Course of study is used.

The parish calendar of the First Church in Plymouth, Mass., announces that the membership of the church school is steadily growing. The force of teachers is complete and the interest in the school is great on the part of both parents and children.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XXVII

I am composed of 36 letters.
My 10, 5, 9, is a metal.
My 1, 13, 14, 35, 29, is a seat.
My 22, 15, 7, 3, 4, is not limp.
My 12, 11, 23, is something that grows on trees.
My 6, 19, 30, 16, 8, 18, 33, 19, 29, is a church.
My 2, 12, 21, 13, 17, 18, is joined.
My 1, 24, 20, is bashful.
My 36, 14, 35, 18, is what nourishes us.
My 31, 28, 18, 25, is to conceal.
My 26, 27, 32, is evening.
My 34 is a vowel.
My whole is a saying of Jesus.

ETHEL S. WILLIAMS.

ENIGMA XXVIII

I am a sentence often occurring in the Psalms, having fifteen letters.

My 15, 3, 4, 5, 7, is a wild flower.
My 10, 6, 11, 12, is a part of the body.
My 1, 13, 2, 9, 8, 14, is a burden bearer.

E. A. C.

BEHEADING PUZZLE

Behead—

To drill a hole, and get crude metal.
Got up, and get a flower.
To instruct, and get every one.
Extreme dislike, and get consumed.
Exchange for money, and get aged.
Hurt, and get a part of the body.
A happening, and get an opening.
A game, and get every one.
In a far country, and get wide.

Place these words (before beheading) in a column and their initials will spell the mother of a King of Israel.

E. A. C.

TWO ANIMALS

T If you will replace the dots with the proper letters, you will have three columns of letters. The first two columns, read downward, will spell the names of two animals. The words are indicated as follows: a dead, a share, a kind of quip, a period of time, a vehicle, skill.

Youth's Companion.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 11

ENIGMA XXI.—Calvin Coolidge.

ENIGMA XXII.—Friendly links.

BEHEADINGS.—Y-awning.

R-ice
A-corn
M-any
A-real
H-ale
T-here
R-over
A-gain
M-ore

MARY-MARTHA.

HIDDEN NAMES OF BOYS AND GIRLS.—1. Catherine, 2. Henry, 3. Mary, 5. Mabel, 6. Asa, Bridget; Ben. 7. Chester.

HIDDEN PROVERB.—"When the cat's away the mice will play."

THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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